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THE PAINTER OF THE POETS

BY JEFFERSON B. FLETCHER

One of the curious things of the Renaissance in England is the almost entire lack of native art. Italy, France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands were swarming with painters and sculptors; in neither art from the sixteenth century comes there one memorable English name. The Tudor century, so sensitively alive to poetry and music, cared but little, it would seem, for the plastic arts, and in that little was satisfied mostly through the works of foreigners. Holbein painted the court of Henry VIII; Torrigiani, Benvenuto Cellini's enemy, worked for the same monarch. Of painters in the time of Elizabeth Francis Meres gives the following list: William and Francis Segar, Thomas and John Butes, Lockey, Syne, Peake, Peter Cole, Arnolde, Marcus, Jacques de Bray, Cornelius, Peter Golchis, Hieronimo and Peter van de Velde. The foreigners alone give Meres's list distinction.

It is also a curious thing that the poet most widely representative of this Elizabethan age, so inexpressive with brush or chisel, was Edmund Spenser, justly called the painter of the poets. "If he had not been a great poet, he would have been a great painter," wrote Leigh Hunt. "The true use of him is as a gallery of pictures which we visit as the mood takes us," declared James Russell Lowell. Lowell's estimate may be inadequate. Personally, I think it is. But the implied definition of Spenser's special art may be conceded. His was to a great extent the temperament of a painter at work in the medium of a poet.

He actually became a great painter—in words, and as such powerfully influenced the taste of his own generation and after. He has also been called "the poets' poet." Doubtless by that phrase Charles Lamb meant that Spenser's delicate and somewhat artificial beauty is too fine for the popular appreciation; but it is true that Spenser has been "the poets' poet" in another sense. He has been one of the greatest masters for English poets in technic, especially in versification and in imagery. Nearly every English poet of importance has gone to school to him; even Dryden, alien though his own talent and the taste of his time, admitted a certain apprenticeship. Some accrued interest attaches to Spenser's technic, then, even for those who may not greatly value his power as a story-teller or as a

preacher through allegory. Conceding that he saw with the eye of a painter, we might sharpen our understanding of his art and its influence by some analysis of his pictorial and decorative technic.

Indeed it was his painter's eye that particularly qualified Spenser to be the representative poet of the Renaissance for England. Between painting and poetry Renaissance aesthetic theorists—especially in Italy—established close relations. Thus, perverting the intention of Horace's "ut pictura poesis," the critic Varchi in his *Lezzioni* (1590) distinguished "painting as silent poetry, and poetry as painting in language." And "this distinction," remarks Dr. Spingarn,¹ "may be considered almost the keynote of Renaissance criticism, continuing even up to the time of Lessing." The natural result of such a theory would be an emphasis on word-painting, on detailed cataloguing description, in poetry; and that emphasis is manifest in most Renaissance poetry, peculiarly so in the poetry of Spenser.

The reciprocity between painting and poetry did not stand upon equal footing. More especially in Italy poetry borrowed far more of the methods of painting than painting of those of poetry. Painters and sculptors set the visual images which the poets endeavored to evoke by words. The Quattrocento poet Poliziano in his *Stanze per la Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano de' Medici* set Giuliano and his ladylove, *la Bella Simonetta*, in an Arcadian landscape peopled with mythological and allegorical figures. Would we know what kind of picture was in Poliziano's imagination, we have but to look at Botticelli's so-called "Primavera" and his "Birth of Venus" in the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Florence. Apparently, the painter has followed the very detail of the verbal instructions of the poet,² but it certainly must have been Botticelli and his fellows who shaped their friend Poliziano's way of visualizing. Raphael also drew from Poliziano's poem hints for his series of frescos in the Palazzo Chigi in Rome illustrating the story of Galatea; but a generation has intervened, and Raphael's gives a visual imagery vastly more sensuous, opulent, sophisticated than would have been native to the Florence of Poliziano and Botticelli.

Indeed, even generally speaking, one may assert that the visual image of a great or even popular artist is certain to impose itself more or less upon his admirers. "Dante drew one angel." If we

¹ *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. N. Y., 1908, p. 42.

² Cf. E. Masi in *La vita ital. nel rinascimento*, Milano, 1899, pp. 22-3.

were to see that angel, we should almost surely label it as of the School of Giotto, who, as Dante declared,³ had in his day the cry. When Charles Dana Gibson was at his height of popularity, the "Gibson Girl" gazed seriously at us from every magazine cover, passed us in the street, sat at our very tables and firesides. Before Mr. Muybridge thought of taking instantaneous photographs of horses in action, we saw—or we thought we saw—galloping horses like rocking-horses. Art must have given us the visual image in the one case or the other, if not in both. It is hard to see how the absolutely untutored eye sees a galloping horse—whether like Velazquez or like Frederick Remington; for the owner of such an eye is generally incapable of explaining himself. Ruskin, again, may be right in stigmatizing the landscapes of Claude Lorraine as "brown stains." But Claude's contemporaries might have retorted that it was not Claude's fault but the landscape's. He had made them *see* the landscape brown, just as modern Impressionism has made us see it violent purple and red and yellow. I have no idea what the landscape is—in itself. There are the Futurists to consider.

But at least it is wrong, and fatally easy to foist an alien visual image upon a poet. Most illustrators have done so. They have translated him into their visual terms without taking the trouble to try to see with his eyes. I do not know whether the thin classicism of Flaxman or the confused romanticism of Doré more belies the visible otherworld of Dante, so richly concrete yet so definite and orderly. The worst of it is, a set of illustrations attached to a piece of imaginative literature may be like a distorting mask between it and the reader forever. Imagine *Paradise Lost* illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley!

A comparison may be almost as controlling to the imagination as an illustration. For instance, Thomas Campbell called Spenser "The Rubens of the poets." Accepted, the comparison profoundly modifies our realization of Spenser's poetry. His Faerie Queene must recline before the mind's eye an opulent blonde in shimmering silks. Lowell had at least an analogous notion in mind when he said of Spenser that "he makes one always think of Venice," and compared him to Paul Veronese, or at times to Guido Reni. On the

³ *Purg.*, xi, 95. Cf. B. Berenson, *Dante's visual images and his early illustrators*. *The Nation*, Feb. 1, 1894. Also J. B. Fletcher, *The Visual Image in Literature*. *Sewanee Rev.*, Oct., 1898.

other hand, Professor F. I. Carpenter associates Spenser's "pictorial powers" with Turner's "dreamy indistinctness."⁴

Naturally, these several comparisons are not wholly without warrant. Otherwise they would not have been thought of. But the warrant, I conceive, is at most imperfect and partial, not to say misleading. Undoubtedly, Campbell seems justified when we see Gluttony riding among the Seven Deadly Sins on a "filthy swine," "his belly upblown with luxury," his eyes "with fatness swollen," in green vine leaves clad,

"For other clothes he could not wear for heat,"
with ivy garlanded,

"From under which fast trickled down the sweat,"
still eating as he rode, and from his "bouzing can" sipping so often that on his seat

"His drunken corse he scarce upholden can."
Rubens not only might have painted the subject, but almost has painted it in his "Triumph of Bacchus" in the Gallery of the Uffizi in Florence.

Again, we seem forced to answer in the affirmative to Lowell's question, "Was not this picture painted by Paul Veronese?"

Arachne figur'd how Iove did abuse
Europa like a Bull, and on his backe
Her through the Sea did beare; so lively seene,
That it true Sea, and true Bull, ye would weene.

Shee seem'd still backe unto the land to looke,
And her play-fellowes ayde to call, and feare
The dashing of the waves, that up she tooke
Her daintie feet, and garments gathered neare:
But (Lord!) how she in everie member shooke,
When as the land she saw no more appeare,
But a wilde wildernes of waters deepe:
Then gan she greatly to lament and weepe.

Before the Bull she pictur'd winged Love,
With his young brother Sport, light fluttering
Upon the waves, as each had been a Dove;
The one his bowe and shafts, the other Spring
A burning teade about his head did move,
As in their syres new love both triumphing:
And manie Nymphes about them flocking round,
And many Tritons which their hornes did sound.⁵

⁴ *An Outline Guide to the Study of Spenser*, Chicago, 1894, p. 22.

⁵ *Muioptomos*, ll. 277 ff.

Indeed, Veronese has painted the "Rape of Europa," and with the same combination of plastic detail and conventional mythological decoration.

But let us consider a moment. We have seen Spenser illustrating themes in common with Rubens and Veronese almost as if he were word-copying their very pictures,—and other examples might be adduced. But the likeness itself is in what is called the literary side of painting, or if you will—the illustrative side.⁶ In the technic of painting itself, apart from theme and composition, Spenser's manner is far from Rubens's or Veronese's as possible. Rubens's figures move in an atmosphere reeking with color of a thousand shades and tints. His living landscape is full of liquid sunshine, in which his figures themselves are embedded,—lumpish masses of color with hazy, vanishing outlines, as we should see them on a shimmering summer noon. Spenser gives no suggestion of color beyond the streak of green of the vine leaves garlanding his symbolic monster,—and they too are symbolic. On the other hand, we can see his Gluttony's very shape and action. We get effects a draftsman or sculptor might give. The color—if there is color—is laid on afterwards,—as a child might color an engraving in a picture-book. To see Spenser's picture as he saw it we must go not to such atmospheric colorists as Rubens or Veronese, but to, say, Mantegna's copperplate engravings with their plastic effects of pure line. His "Silenus with Satyrs" might indeed serve as precise illustration of the Satyrs leading Una to Sylvanus—

And all the way their merry pipes they sound, . . .
And with their horned feet do wear the ground,
Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant spring.⁷

There is similar contrast between Spenser's imitation of Moschus's idyl of the "Rape of Europa" and Veronese's picture. In the word-picture there is no landscape detail, no atmosphere, no color. All is plastic grouping and movement. Veronese's canvas, on the other hand, is full of mannered pose, of languorous sensibility, of volup-

⁶ Even here there are differences. Spenser's Gluttony differs from Rubens's Bacchus in having, in spite of his enormous corpulence, a neck "long and fyne" "like a crane." Spenser got the detail from the Emblem books. Apparently, a long neck was given to Gluttony on the idea that delicacies might so be longer enjoyed in the swallowing. Rubens was altogether realistic.

⁷ F. Q., I, i, 6.

tuous suggestiveness. It has depth of background, mist, and cloud, and harmonies of color more subtly luscious than even Rubens.

As for Turner's "dreamy indistinctness," this is again a matter of atmospheric effects, to which, as a rule, Spenser is insensitive. He does rarely suggest something of the kind, as when, after describing *Lucifera* and her evil train, he adds:

and still before their way
A foggy mist had covered all the land.⁸

Even this mist is, of course, symbolic. But certainly as a rule, his visual images, though unlocalized, are yet precise, sharply defined. In *Faerie Land* we may not recognize clearly at any moment just where we are, but what we see is neither dreamy nor indistinct. Indeed, like many of the earlier Renaissance painters, Spenser fills in descriptive details scrupulously and over-scrupulously. He is careful not to make his Satyrs kneel in worship of fair *Una*. Physiologically, they cannot kneel, but they

Their backward bent knees teach her humbly to obey.⁹

When *Belphebe* fair bursts upon *Braggadocchio* and *Trompart*, *Braggadocchio* cravenly crawls into a bush. *Trompart* is terrified, but awaits what may happen. In spite of his terror, he sees enough deauties of the lady to fill ten stanzas and a fraction, including such betails as that her "silken camus" was "besprinkled" "with golden aygulets" "and all the skirt about was hemd with golden fringe,"

And her streight legs most bravely were embayld
In gilden buskins of costly cordwayne,
All bard with golden bendes, which were entayld
With curious antickes, and full fayre aumayld:
Before, they fastned were under her knee
In a rich jewell, and therein entrayld
The ends of all their knots, that none might see
How they within their fouldings close enwrapped bee.¹⁰

If all in a minute and at some distance the scared *Trompart* could take in such details as these, he might well qualify for a society reporter. It is a perspective analogous to that of the Chinese—and Pre-Raphaelite—painter who veils in a leaf yards distant from the spectator. If with Turner objects are "dreamily indistinct,"

⁸ *F. Q.*, I, iv, 36.

⁹ *F. Q.*, I, vi, 11.

¹⁰ *F. Q.*, II, iii, 26 ff.

it is because they are so in fact to him really or imaginatively observing them under the given conditions.

In all else, assuredly, any comparison between Spenser and Turner as "painters" is fantastic. Turner's painting is called by Ruskin "the loveliest ever yet done by man in imagery of the physical world." One might perhaps dispute the superlative, but not the direction of the praise. Turner's strength was intimacy with visible nature. Spenser's eye for visible nature was so little focussed that "for vegetation he has only the adjectives 'green,' 'pallid-green,' and 'pallid,' for the ocean no realistic hues, for mountains none except 'green.'"¹¹ His feeling of nature is dominantly utilitarian or symbolic. Like the earlier Italian and Flemish painters, he valued landscape as merest decorative background. His treatment of it was, like Botticelli's or Dürer's, conventional and schematic. Wood-eny hills and unshadowed valleys, capes and bays carefully balance one another in a kind of vacant airless space. Balanced and panoramic just like the background, for instance, of Dürer's "Adoration of the Magi" is this—

It was a still
And calmy bay, on th' one side sheltered
With the brode shadow of an hoarie hill;
On th' other side an high rocke toured still,
That twixt them both a pleasaunt port they made,
And did like an halfe theatre fulfill.¹²

Spenser's mental eye sees the form and symmetry of the site, but without suggestion of even Dürer's crude color. The Elizabethan's feeling about nature was still largely medieval. He is apt to think of trees less as things of beauty than of use. When Una and the Red Cross Knight take refuge from storm in the dense wood of Error,

Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,
The sayling pine, the cedar proud and tall,
The vine-prop elme, the poplar never dry,
The builder oake, sole king of forrests all,
The aspine good for staves, the cypresse funerall, . . .¹³

and so on for another entire utilitarian stanza. Of course, here is no real visualization at all. Hardly more is in those numerous

¹¹ A. E. Pratt, *On the use of color in the Romantic poets*, Chicago, 1898.

¹² *F. Q.*, II, xii, 30.

¹³ *F. Q.*, I, i, 8.

passages in which the poet, to give impression of superlative loveliness, lists stereotyped perfections,—for instance

It was a chosen plott of fertile land,
 Emongst wide waves sett, like a little nest,
 As if it had by Nature's cunning hand
 Bene choycely picked out from all the rest,
 And laid forth for ensample of the best:
 No dainty flowre or herbe, that growes on grownd,
 No arborett with painted blossomes drest,
 And smelling sweete, but there it might be fownd
 To bud out faire, and her sweete smels throwe al arownd.
 No tree, whose braunches did not bravely spring;
 No braunch, whereon a fine bird did not sitt;
 No bird, but did her shrill notes sweetely sing;
 No song, but did containe a lovely ditt . . .¹⁴

The description would equally well fit any agreeable watering-place. In localities so quite abstract, it is easily believable that, as Sir Calidore and fair Pastorella and shepherd Coridon

One day all three together went
 To the green wood to gather strawberries,
 There chaunst to them a dangerous accident:
 A tigre forth out of the wood did rise, etc.¹⁵

One reason why the Elizabethan poet does not parallel the visual imagery of a Rubens or a Veronese or a Turner is that in sixteenth century England or Ireland there was no such art or artist to teach men how to see. We see what we look for, and what we look for is no matter of instinct but of training. Spenser's eye was trained not by the great art of the continent, except indirectly through continental *literary* compositions, but by such pictorial compositions as were familiar in England in stained glass, tapestry, fresco, and portraits, engravings, illustrated or illuminated books, and the living pictures of pageant and procession.

His eye was accustomed to flat poster-like coloring, brilliant pure colors, especially to gold as a pigment, so dear to primitive painters. He uses gold more than any other color.¹⁶ Whether for hair or sunshine or gown or ornament he lavishes it. Lady Munera has golden hands; the giant Disdain golden feet. Florimel is a

¹⁴ *F. Q.*, II, vi, 12-13. Cf. IV, x, 22-5, *et al.*

¹⁵ *F. Q.*, VI, x, 34.

¹⁶ Miss Pratt says it occurs 96 times in the *Faerie Queene* to "green" second with 74 times.

vision in gold and white, riding upon her snow-white palfrey, herself in cloth-of-gold and with a gold circlet around her golden head. The whole of the realm of Mammon¹⁷ is a magnificent monochrome of smoky gold.

His yron cote, all overgrowne with rust,
Was underneath envelopèd with gold

And round about him lay on every side
Great heapes of gold¹⁸

Pluto's cave was

Embost wirh massy gold of glorious giufte.

whereover

. . . . Arachne high did lifte
Her cunning web, and spred her subtile nett,
Enwrappèd in fowle smoke and clouds more black then jett.

Both roofe, and floore, and walls were all of gold,
But overgrowne with dust and old decay¹⁹

Beyond are furnaces bright with molten gold, and then "a broad gate all built of beaten gold," guarded by a "sturdie villein," who "himselfe was all of golden mould." The gate led into a hall, in which

Many great golden pillours did upbeare
The massy roofe, and riches huge sustayne,
And every pillour deckèd was full deare
With crownes, and diadems²⁰

And there enthroned was Ambition "in glistring glory," holding

. . . a great gold chaine ylinckèd well,
Whose upper end to highest heaven was knitt,
And lower part did reach to lowest hell²¹

Adjacent is the Garden of Proserpina, wherein was a goodly tree "loaden all" with "golden apples glistering bright."

Allegorical this is of course, but none the less gorgeous in its contrast of black and gold. Spenser loves these contrasts,—as in the meeting of Duesza,

¹⁷ *F. G.*, II, vii.

¹⁸ 4-5.

¹⁹ 28-9.

²⁰ 43.

²¹ 46.

sunny bright,
Adorned with gold and jewels shining cleare,

and "griesly Night," "in a foule blacke pitchy mantle clad" beside her "yron charet" with its "coleblacke steedes" champing "on their rusty bits."²² He dresses his characters in like vivid contrasts—Una in black and white on her white ass (I, i, 4); Duessa in scarlet and gold, on a palfrey with like trappings (I, ii, 13); St. George with the silver of his red-crossed shield matched by his gray steed (II, i, 18); young Tristram in Lincoln green and silver lace (VI, ii, 5); and Radegund, gorgeous in purple and silver and white and gold (V, v, 2-3). It is essentially "poster" art.

Spenser's love of crude colors combined with his sensitiveness to "tactile values," to borrow Mr. Bernhard Berenson's phrase,²³ associates him with the earlier Florentine painters. His maiden queen of the "April" eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender* suggests Botticelli's *Primavera* as closely as the stanzas of Poliziano which are supposed to be based on it. To visualize Belpheobe with her "yellow lockes, crisped like golden wyre," waved by the wind "like a penon wide dispred,"²⁴ we should look at Botticelli's *Venus new-risen from the sea*.

And how much more Botticellian is Spenser's ideal of feminine beauty than Rubens's too material opulence or Veronese's indolent languor. Spenser's women keep in training. They run, dance, leap—as Amoret—"like roebucke light."²⁵ They are never fleshy. We are told of Una's "dainty limbs" (I, iii, 4), of Belpheobe's "nimble thigh," and "lank loin" (III, vi, 18), of Britomart's "lanck syde" (III, ix, 21), of Florimell's "sclender waist" (III, vii, 36), of Serena's "fraile mansion of mortalitie" (VI, iii, 28), of Mirabella's "daintie self" (VI, vii, 39), of Pastorella's "countenance trim" (VI, ix, 9), of Mutabilitie,

of stature tall as any there
Of all the Gods, and beautiful of face. (VII, vi, 28)

In his statuesque groupings again, Spenser reminds of Botticelli. Take the group, for instance, at the porch of the Temple of Venus.²⁶ Before Concord in her "Danish hood," sitting, stand the half-brothers,

²² I, v, 20-1.

²³ *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance*.

²⁴ II, iii, 30.

²⁵ IV, vii, 22.

²⁶ IV, x, 31-3.

Love and Hate, hand in hand perforce, yet Hate with averted face and biting his lip.

Like Botticelli also is the Elizabethan's power of suggesting action and movement, such as the gorgeous procession of the Dawn—²⁷

At last the golden orientall gate
Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre,
And Phoebus, fresh as brydegroom to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
And hurld his glistring beams through gloomy ayre.

Distinct again is the picture at the bridal of Una and her Knight where

all dauncing in a row,
The comely virgins came, with girlands dight,
As fresh as flowres in meadow greene doe grow,
When morning deaw upon their leaves doth light;
And in their handes sweet timbrels all upheld on hight.²⁸

Or by a single touch Spenser gives illusion of movement,—as when to the Elfin knight, it

seemed that the merry sound
Of a shrill pipe he playing heard on hight,
And many feete fast thumping th' hollow ground . . .²⁹

I would not say that much would be gained by calling Spenser the Botticelli of the poets rather than the Rubens of the poets, or the Veronese, or the Turner. The case is not so simple as that. But I believe we should at least better realize his visual imagery by studying the pictures of Botticelli, Dürer, and other primitive colorists, and the line engravings of Mantegna, than by reading into his word-pictures the studied chiaroscuro and atmospheric spaces of Rubens or Veronese or Turner. It would be helpful, indeed, if we were able to put our fingers upon some of the sources in the plastic arts in England of Spenser's own actual imagery. It is, however, a research still to be undertaken.

One type of his visual imagery is easily accounted for. I mean that not inconsiderable part of his imagery associated with emblems. For such there was a rich storehouse of models in the Emblem books, a genre now largely forgotten, but in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries widely popular throughout Europe. I have myself a bibliography of several hundred titles of works and

²⁷ I, v, 2.

²⁸ I, xii, 6.

²⁹ VI, x, 10.

editions of Emblem writers in this period, and have no idea that it is in any sense complete. Spenser's first publication—his translation of the "visions" of Du Bellay and Petrarch—were really verbal emblems. In Van der Noot's *Theater* they were accompanied by symbolic illustrations, thus making them complete emblems according to Cotgrave's definition in his Dictionary of an emblem as "a picture and short posie, expressing some particular conceit." Spenser was so much pleased with his experiments at second hand in this kind that he subsequently wrote, and finally published in his *Complaints*, more of the same kind in the *Visions of the World's Vanity*. It would seem that he had intended to equip these sonnets with pictures, so making complete emblems. At least, in the postscript to his letter to Harvey of April 2, 1580, he wrote: "I take best my *Dreames* should come forth alone, being growen by meanes of the Glosse (running continually in maner of a Paraphrase) fully as great as my *Calendar*. Therein be some things excellently and many things wittily discoursed of E. K., and the pictures so singularly set forth, and purtrayed, as if *Michael Angelo* were there, he could (I think) nor amende the beste, nor reprehende the worst. I know you would lyke them passing well." It may be remarked that a gloss to explain the often intricate or obscure symbolism was a common accompaniment of the Emblem books. Again, in the *Shepheards Calender* itself, the woodcuts before each eclogue are many of them emblematic in character. Thus, as Henry Green remarks,³⁰ "In the month 'Februarie,' there is introduced a veritable word-picture of 'the Oake and the Brier,' and also a pictorial illustration, with the sign of the Fishes in the clouds, to indicate the season of the year." The so-called "emblems" appended to the eclogues are rather mottoes.

A further impetus to interest in the Emblem in England must have been given by the publication in 1586 of Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblems*. Whitney's collection was chiefly from the continental masters, Alciati, Paradin, Sambucus, and others. 202 of his emblems were taken directly from the works of these writers, 23 were suggested by them, only 23 were Whitney's own invention. But his book thus gave a fairly wide survey of the genre.

The *Faerie Queene* is packed with emblematic imagery. It is the least successfully managed. At the very outset we see the Lady Una leading a Lamb in leash. Illustrated, it would form an emblem of Innocence led by Truth. But, on the literal side, for Una to drag

³⁰ *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers*, London, 1870, p. 125.

that poor Lamb along with her on her long quest would be an outrage. Spenser conveniently forgets the Lamb. So again we are presented to Faith and Hope in the House of Holiness. Faith

was araied all in lilly white,
And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,
With wine and water fild up to the hight,
In which a serpent did himselfe enfold,
That horroure made to all that did behold;
But she no whitt did change her constant mood:
And in her other hand she fast did hold
A booke that was both signd and seald with blood,
Wherein darke things were writt, hard to be understood.

The younger sister, Speranza, is less cumbered, yet

Upon her arme a silver anchor lay,
Whereon she leaned ever, as befell:
And ever up to heven, as she did pray,
Her stedfast eyes were bent, ne swarved other way.³¹

These are perfectly good emblems. We can see their likes in a dozen Emblem books. But one would imagine it difficult to make a practicable character in dramatic action out of a creature so hieratically posed and burdened. To enter

Ylinked arme in arme in lovely wise,

as they are said to, with brimming cup, book, anchor and all, must have involved some power of legerdemain. In fact, Spenser drew the emblematic picture, as again of

sober Modestie
Holding her hand upon her gentle hart,³²

and then, if he desired to utilize the character, just ignored the emblematic encumbrances.

I recognize that I have but scratched the surface of my problem. The chief justification of this paper might be that it should set some other student to work more efficiently in the same field. Indeed, the field itself might easily be extended to include other than visual images alone. Spenser's auditory images are very beautiful, and frequently enrich the effect of his visual imagery,—as, for example, the murmuring of the stream suggested in the following landscape.

Into that forest farre they thence him led,
Where was their dwelling, in a pleasant glade

³¹ I, x, 13-14.

³² IV, x, 51.

With mountaines rownd about environed,
 And mightie woodes, which did the valley shade,
 And like a stately theatre it made;
 And in the midst a little river plaide
 Emongst the pumy stones, which seemd to plaine
 With gentle murmure that his cours they did restraine.³³

Often indeed the auditory image is reinforced by onomatopoeia, as when to "lull" Morpheus

in his slumber soft,
 A trickling streame from high rocke tumbling downe,
 And ever drizling raine upon the loft,
 Mixt with murmuring winde, much like the sowne
 Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swowne . . .³⁴

Striking again is the auditory, the almost tactile, image in this single line—

And many feete fast thumping th' hollow ground.³⁵

The *Faerie Queene* is packed with such sensuously fine effects. Perhaps he was right in setting the poet's power to express sensuous beauty above the painter's, when he speaks of

poets witt, that passeth painter farre
 In picturing the parts of beauty daynt.³⁶

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³³ III, v, 39.

³⁴ I, i, 41. Cf. II, xii, 70-1, *et al.*

³⁵ VI, x, 10.

³⁶ III, Pr., 2.